

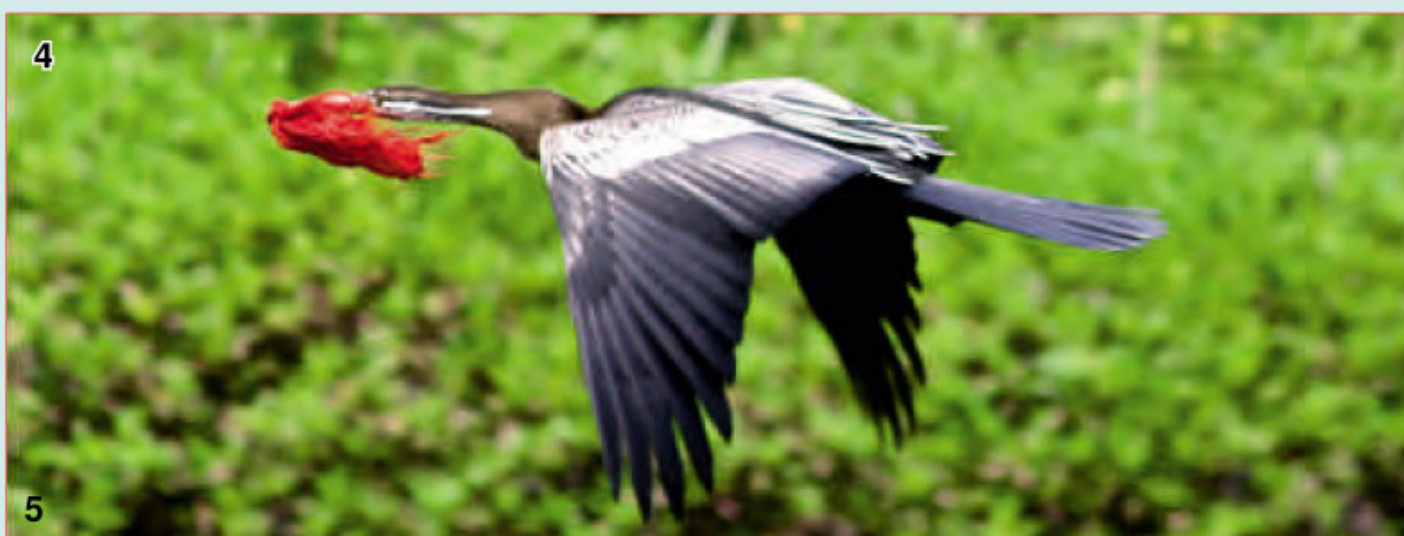
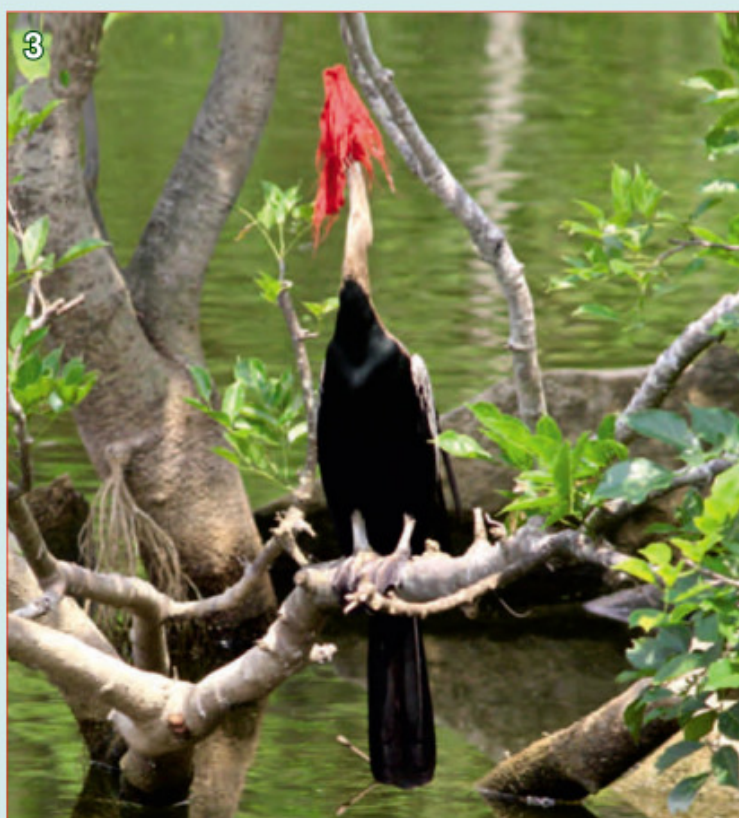
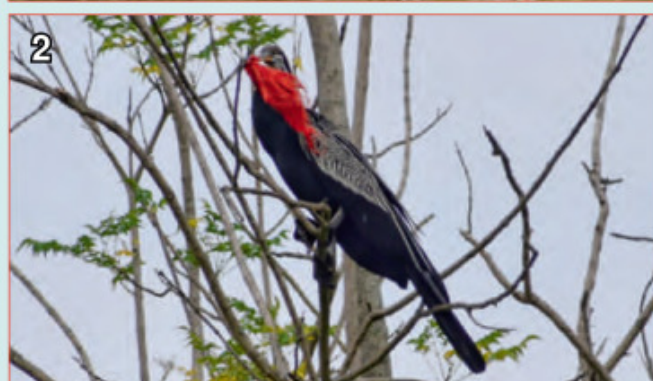
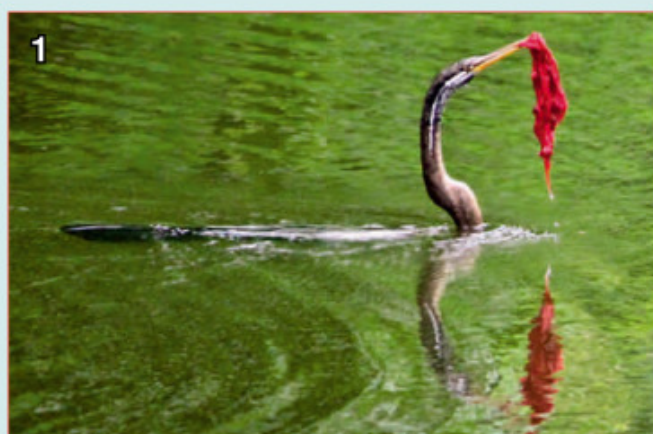


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Note from the Publisher

Dear Fellow Birdwatchers,

To playback or not to playback recorded birdsongs - that is the question for birdwatchers.

In this issue we have published two articles viz., 'A duet with Brown Boobook (*Ninox scutulata*) in Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary, Kerala', by Aswin Sai K V and 'First photographic and recording of voice, of Oriental Scops Owl (*Otus sunia*) from Chhattisgarh, India', by AM K Bharos, Ravi Naidu, and Ameet Mandavia. The authors, incidentally, have either used the birdsong recordings or birdcall playbacks in their field studies.

Using bird recordings can help birders get perfect views of birds even while they are trying to acquaint themselves with the calls of various birds. Although birdcall playbacks provide insight into behavioural ecology of birds, our first obligation is to ensure their safety; given that this controversial method may still be detrimental to the birds.

Playback (playing a recording of a bird's song) is one of the most powerful tools and serious birders often use birdsong playbacks to watch or test the presence or absence of a particular bird species in a given habitat. Since, many species of birds are too shy to come into the open, birders often use their recorded calls in order to coax or cajole them into view. Whether this apparent deceit has any significant impact on the birds or not is a matter of never-ending debate. Some of the contrasting opinions expressed in the debate are listed hereunder for the benefit of the readers:-

Peter May, in his 'Screech Owling' article in Nature Photographers, relates his experience of playback of owl tapes attracting predatory birds to the mobbing flock due to the concentration of prey. In his opinion "Overuse of tape playback to attract birds can be detrimental to the survival and reproduction of some species by preventing them from devoting full attention to other biological demands, such as feeding their offspring."

Weeden and Falls have conducted several field studies and according to them, playback of songs are sufficient stimuli to evoke behavior which normally occurs in response to the natural singing of another bird.

Bruce W. Miller, Associate Conservation Zoologist, Wildlife Conservation Society, Gallon, Belize, states that ".... many bird species formerly common are no longer to be found in the same locations where some guides play tapes for 15-20 min without stop". The birds, however, continue to be found in similar undisturbed habitats. His observations are based on records kept over a period of 14+ years.

Alvaro Jaramillo, Senior Biologist, San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory and professional tour guide leader has used playback on tours as well as in his scientific quests. He believes that "tape playback is harmless" and the territory holding male emerges the victor in the duel. There is an impact on behavior, "but then it is much better than people trampling vegetation or trying to sneak up on birds..."

Bridget Stutchbury, Professor and Canada Research Chair, York University, Toronto and Author of 'Silence of the Songbirds', agrees that playback is to be generally discouraged unless it is used specifically for formal data collection and/or research. According to her, "Recreational playbacks for birding can be harmful if done repeatedly to the same pairs of birds; and it's unnecessary".

According to Bruce Falls, Ornithologist and Professor of Zoology, University of Toronto, playback is a valuable tool for both research and counting and its use in moderation is justified with the gains outweighing any downsides. His field experiences with White-throated Sparrows and Meadowlarks showed that effect of playback was 'negligible' and the birds "habituated".

Alf King, says that "In my personal opinion I don't like to see tapes being used, especially just for a "quick tick" for which I believe some (not all) visiting birders may be guilty." Jos Stratford, opines that "I agree with the general consensus - an isolated, one-off use of a tape lure probably is of little consequence to an individual bird, but repeated use is more likely to be an issue."

Richard Klim, says that "I have seen examples where birders who are totally against the use of tapes will instead spend many hours wandering repeatedly through fragile habitat, ...,

causing untold damage and seriously disrupting the normal routines of countless birds."

Dan Bieker, Field Ornithologist at Piedmont Virginia Community College, on a live broadcast on the 'Birding Ethics' had this to say to the question 'is (playback) so good for the bird?': "no". "It disrupts the birds. A lot of these birds are right on the edge of survival. And to disturb them like that, um, raises some ethical questions." John Spahr, Former Virginia Society of Ornithology president, says that "If one is cautious and limits the use of audio recordings, I think that's perfectly acceptable."

To sum up, when someone resorts to birdsong playbacks, it is countered with panic and apprehension, especially by those

who advocate that birdwatching itself disturbs birds. According to them everything that we do has an impact on birds. Whilst they are trying to come up with a valid justification for a total ban on bird song playbacks; they ought to be voicing their concerns equally on more contentious issues like loss of habitat, deforestation, encroachment, mining, hunting, trapping, pollution of waterbodies etc., which are directly jeopardizing the very existence of several species of birds in India.

Thanking you

Yours in bird conservation,

S. Sridhar, Publisher, NLBW



Recent sighting records of Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) in India

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Here in this research note, we give three important sighting records of the rare Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) in India. Besides that, we have given a summary of all records of the species from India till date.

During a regular bird watching visit to the Bargaon dam, Yavatmal district, Maharashtra (20°26'46"N 78°11'22"E), 19 November 2013, PJ spotted a different looking gull, perched in flock of other gulls and Black-winged Stilts. It resembled a Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) at first sight. Unsure of its identity he took a few photographs of the bird for documentation. The bird had a grey collar and nape, dark primaries projecting, dark ear spot, dark legs and thin looking greenish yellow bill and different structure. Wing tips and tail tip were black. The bird was identified as Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) assuming breeding plumage from the images. Importantly, Black-legged Kittiwake is a coastal bird and Yavatmal is at least 550 km inland from any coast of India.

On 26 November 2019 a Black-legged Kittiwake was found entangled in a fishing net, at Khudiya dam in Mungeli district (located on the border of Achanakmar Tiger Reserve) Chhattisgarh. The Forest Department was informed and the bird was rescued. The bird was checked by a veterinarian and released back to the dam on the same day. The bird took a strong flight and soon disappeared.

It was like a smaller gull, but had a grey back, grey wings, also closed wings showing a broad black band (with mixture of grey feathers yet in place), prominent black collar, dark ear spot, black legs and a black bill (see image). The feet did not look so black as all other images. In flight Upperside of the wings clearly showed a broad black band across both

wings forming the shape of alphabet "M". The first four primaries are seen to be black with white trailing edges. Also, the white tail feathers had black tips. The bird was identified as first winter Black-legged Kittiwake.

RK and VK visited Akshi village and the adjacent beach near Alibaug, dist. Raigad, Maharashtra (18°36'8"N, 72°53'53"E) especially to watch migratory waders during 21–23 December 2021. Our main aim was to document waders and also locate as many waders flagged by Bombay Natural History Society here.

On 21 December 2021, I saw a Black-legged Kittiwake among a huge mixed species flock of gulls and terns. The beach had Little Terns (*Sternula albigularis*), Lesser Crested Terns (*Thalasseus bengalensis*), Greater Crested Terns (*Thalasseus bergii*), few Caspian Terns (*Hydroprogne caspia*), Common Terns (*Sterna hirundo*) and Sandwich Terns (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*). It was difficult to locate the lone kittiwake among a flock of around thousand similarly coloured grey-white gulls and terns. The beach walkers were constantly disturbing the bird flocks. The entire flock took to wings before I could photograph the kittiwake.

Next day, on 23 December 2021, RK located the Black-legged Kittiwake at the far end of a flock of gulls and terns. Luckily the bird decided to take a bath in the tides and gave us good time to record its activities (see image and video <https://youtu.be/v2sZYskGCZY>). It resembled a gull with its white head and body, but had grey back, grey wings tipped solid black, also closed wings showing a broad black stripe, prominent black collar, dark ear spot, black legs and a black bill (see image). In flight the first four primaries are seen to be black with white trailing edges.

Sr.	Location	Date and ageing	Peer Birder	Reference/ Source
1.	Sangam, near Sawai Madhopur, Rajasthan	03 February 2001,	Magnus Ullman	Ullman, 2014
2.	Morjim, Goa*	16–19 January 2005, first winter	Mark Newsome	OBI
3.	Morjim, Goa*	21 January 2005	Anand Prasad	Prasad, 2005
4.	Akshi beach, Alibaug, dist. Raigad, Maharashtra	23 November 2012, juvenile	Chinmay Rahane and Siddhesh Brahmanekar	Rahane & Brahmanekar, 2013
5.	Akshi beach, Alibaug, dist. Raigad, Maharashtra	23 November 2012, juvenile / first winter	Tushar Dixit and Vishwatej Pawar	OBI
6.	Brahmaputra near Majuli Island, Assam	30 November 2012, juvenile / first winter	Sujan Chatterjee	OBI
7.	Soorwal dam, near Ranthambhore, Rajasthan	11 December 2012	Jim Lawrence	Lawrence, 2013
8.	Puthankadapuram Beach, Chavakkad, Thrissur, Kerala	25 December 2012, 18 & 24 January 2013, first winter	Sandeep Das, Suhaaz Kechery, P. P. Sreenivasan & Sreeranj C.	Das <i>et al.</i> , 2013, OBI
9.	Chavakkad Beach, Thrissur, Kerala	2 February 2013, first winter	Jainy Kuriakose	OBI
10.	Chavakkad Beach, Thrissur, Kerala	5 February 2013, juvenile	Garima Bhatia	OBI
11.	Borgaon dam, Yavatmal district, Maharashtra	19 November 2013, assuming breeding plumage	Pramod Jirapure	This paper
12.	Water tank near Chandipur, dist. Balasore, Odisha	21 January 2015	Monalisa Bhujabal, Chinmaya Bhujabal Nanda Kishore Bhujabal & Chinmaya Bhujabal	Bhujabal <i>et al.</i> , 2015
13.	Frazerganj, South 24 Parganas District, West Bengal	18 March 2017, first winter	Kaustav Khan and Soumya Aon	OBI
14.	Modhva Beach, near Mandvi, Gujarat	24 December 2017	Rishi Mehta	OBI
15.	Khudiya dam, dist. Mungeli, Chhattisgarh	26 November 2019, first winter	Ms. Vijaya Ratre	This paper
16.	Akshi beach, Alibaug, dist. Raigad, Maharashtra	30 November 2020	Alok Bhawe, Pradnyawant Mane	eBird
17.	Akshibeach, Alibaug, dist. Raigad, Maharashtra	21&23 December 2021, first winter	Raju Kasambe and Vedant Kasambe	This paper



*Note: These two records (2 & 3 - Morjim, Goa) in the Table could be the same. Anand might have quoted the record by Mark Newsome on OBI website.

Also, the white tail feathers had black tips. Size was approximately as of a Black-headed Gull. The bird was identified as first winter Black-legged Kittiwake. This is not the first record of the species from Alibaug. Rahane & Bramhankar (2013) had reported it from there on 23 November 2012. Also, the species was seen here by Alok Bhawe and Pradnyawant Mane on 30 November 2020 (Bhave, 2020).

An online search on www.orientalbirdimages.org (OBI) yielded some photographic sighting records of the Black-legged Kittiwake from India. The following table summarizes all sighting records from India in published literature, eBird and OBI in chronological order. The Black-legged Kittiwake is a coastal bird of the arctic to subarctic regions of the world (del Hoyo *et al.*, 1996).

The Black-legged Kittiwake has got its specific name 'tridactyla' as the hind toe of each foot is reduced to a mere bump, leaving only three functional toes instead of four (Harrison 1988). It breeds on coastlines and islands across much of the North Pacific and North Atlantic oceans (Varty and Tanner 2009), as well as on islands off the northern coasts of Russia and Norway, from northern Canada and northern United States, through Greenland, western and northern Europe, and east as far as the northern Taymyr Peninsula and Severnaya Zemlya in Russia. However, during the non-breeding season, the Black-legged Kittiwake moves from the coastal areas to the open seas. It spends its winters across most of the northern Atlantic and Pacific oceans, as far south as Mexico, West Africa, and the East China Sea. Unlike most other gulls, the Black-legged Kittiwake spends most of the year far out at sea, away from land (Harrison 1988).

Ali & Ripley (1987) did not include this species in their *magnus opus* 10 volumes on "Handbook of the birds of India and Pakistan - together with those of Bangladesh, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and Sri Lanka" as there were no sightings of the species reported in the area before the publication of these volumes. "The Birds of South Asia – The Ripley Guide" (Rasmussen and Anderton 2012) mention "immature recently photographed in Goa; pelagic in winter in normal range; rare vagrant on migration far inland, such birds usually being storm driven or ill." The increasing sighting records of juvenile or first winter birds of the species indicate the vagrant nature of the species and also to go far into mainland during the non-breeding season.

The increasing tribe of good bird watchers in India well equipped with good quality photographic equipment has resulted in a spurt of sighting records of this species (and many cryptic species). The increased usage of social media for faster communication also has added to more correct identifications of species, which needs special attention or otherwise these get neglected in huge flocks of commoner gulls and terns. The authors feel that many more records of

the species will come up from India considering the above-mentioned points.

Acknowledgements:

Special thanks to Mr. Mohit Sahu who helped RK contact VR.

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Oriental Darter (*Anhinga melanogaster*) in Distress

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Walking by our Lake in the morning of Thursday, May 06 both Uday and I witnessed a predicament that an uncommon visitor to our *SUVIDHA Retirement Village* had got itself into.

An Oriental (aka Indian) Darter (*Anhinga melanogaster*) (common name "Snake Bird"), perched on a low hanging branch near the rocks on the eastern side of the lake, was trying desperately to get rid of a piece of red cloth in which its long beak was entangled.

It kept moving its head from side to side trying to get rid of the cloth.

Finally, when it spied my presence, the poor bird flew across the Lake, with its beak still entangled in the cloth, to perch on the top of the high *Millingtonia hortensis* (aka Tree Jasmine or Indian Cork Tree) on the west bank.

It sat there moving its head trying hard to get rid of the piece of cloth.

When I went back to the Lake after another 20 minutes, the bird had flown away.

The following morning (Friday, May 07) another of our neighbours, DrSharada Lakshminarasimhaiah, sighted the bird perched on a tree near our Lake and kept a solo vigil until I joined her. We tracked the bird as it kept swimming underwater and above the surface until it finally settled on a tree near the footbridge at the southwestern corner of the Lake.

Soon thereafter, Karthik Prabhu of People For Animals' Wildlife Rescue Centre and his crew joined us. But while they were getting ready to climb the tree and our gardeners were lowering our boat into the water, the bird took flight and flew out of our Village in the direction of Vadera Halli Lake. Karthik left after asking me to inform him if the bird returns to our Village. Sharada whose cottage overlooks the small waterbody said she would keep a lookout. Karthik said that as the species is diurnal the chances of capturing it would be better after dusk. Here are some pictures of the bird taken this morning.

We have not sighted the bird since May 07.



Observation on the unusual nesting site and behavior of Purple Sunbird (*Nectarinia asiatica*) at Bhilai, Chhattisgarh. India.

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The Purple Sunbird (*Nectarinia asiatica*) one of the most common and liked and widely distributed bird of the garden. Its nesting has always been a subject of interest for observers and occurs primarily in hotter months somewhat from February to June but reported throughout the year in most parts of the peninsula. Nest is of oblong shape made of soft grass and fibers, small leaves, bark, cobweb etc, with pieces of bark, caterpillar droppings, bits of paper, string and other rubbish. The nest is mostly suspended on a twig, couple of

meters from ground, trellis-work of verandahs. Some interesting sites on record are hanging electric wires and rafters in verandah. Incubation is apparently by female only, for period of 14 to 15 days. Feeding and caring of chicks by both parents. (Ali and Ripley 1987)

We observed an unusual nesting site at Sector -10, Bhilai, Chhattisgarh, where a pendent pouch was regularly seen from a rope used for drying clothes in courtyard of a

residence. The observations in month of March nesting, extended from 2016 to 2018, when were recorded and some interesting change in behavior of species.

The nest building activities commenced from first week of March and completed in about 10 days, with simultaneous display and courtship behavior by the male sunbird. After the completion of the nest, the two eggs were laid and incubated by the female. It was pretty interesting to see the bird peeping outside and watching the daily household activities of inhabitants of the house. They kept their vigil till 10:30 or 11:00 pm, in electric lights of courtyard or till the lights were switched off. The same exercise was observed for several days, when one morning beseeching calls of the newly hatched chicks were heard. In the quest to bring food to the hatchlings, the parent sunbirds ignored the presence of inhabitants of the house. Few days later the chicks came out of nest and the parent sunbirds were seen teaching the fledglings to fly. Finally when the chicks were conversant with this art, the family left the nest, only to return after a year for breeding. A new nest was built every year during March. They invariably arrived to start nesting during first week of March and the whole breeding cycle ended in about a month's time. Nest was built under the roof, on a GI wire tied across the verandah for drying clothes in the busy passage.

Salim Ali (1987) has speculated changes in behavior of birds due to spread of electricity, in the compound of the house

an incandescent lamp is installed for illuminating the portico. No other avian species other than sparrows come to the premises during late evening hours to feed on leftover cooked rice grains after washing the utensils. The female sunbird kept looking out from its nest visible from the pictures. She remained at the nest throughout the night and left only at dawn. No sooner the lights were switched off the female used end her vigil by retracting its head inside the nest. Bird calls were seldom heard when inside nest.

A similar nest was located in neighborhood of our house, built on the wire, which is also used for drying clothes. The birds were least concerned about the anthropogenic disturbances, though this year a washing machine is installed in the compound and is in regular use. The birds were seen loitering around, but were reluctant to build a nest here, probably due to the incessant noise caused by the washing machine.

The nest was built inside a house, in busy area, on a GI wire. It was built above the wire, instead of suspending it, which is a normal practice. This was interesting and an unusual phenomenon.

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A duet with Brown Boobook (*Ninox scutulata*) in Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary, Kerala.

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During my MS dissertation work, almost throughout my fieldwork, I noticed that the most responding owl species in the Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary (WWLS) area is the Brown Boobook or Brown Hawk-Owl (*Ninox scutulata*). These are one of the least concerned species which are distributed though out the Western Ghat region (Jayson and Babu 2009). These are the one of the owl species which can be easily identified by their calls (Neelakantan 1979, Babu and Jayson 2009). There is not much information about these species other than its distributional records in India. There is a case of snaring of owls, which also mentions Brown Boobook and Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*. Inglis 1902). Call playback method is a very useful survey method for finding *crepuscular* species like owls (Johnson

1981). From my work I concluded that, the response of the owl species is almost immediate after the end of the call playback, if there are any owls in the vicinity, especially for the presence of Brown Boobooks. So that, from my early surveys, I used 90 seconds of call playback, followed by 210 seconds response time for each species. The time consumed is very high for this method. But then I realized that 30 seconds of call playback and 90 seconds of response time were ideal. I surveyed from January to April, from all the survey, I concluded that after the broadcasting Brown Boobook call, the primary respondent of the call was either an Oriental Scops Owl or the Brown Boobook itself. But mostly it's an Oriental Scops owl (see chart). Further, after the initiation of the call playback, these species respond

throughout the survey time. These species were found to be silent when some bigger owls responded. This somewhat showed the niche between some species. A detailed study is needed! And mostly, these are the species which are frequently detected throughout the survey period. An instance of an individual Brown Boobook curiously approaching the speaker broadcasting the calls and flying back to its roosting site in the silver oak tree (*Grevillea robusta*), was exciting indeed. Male and female Boobooks look similar, and are difficult to distinguish by sight alone. However some photographs were taken. The boobook is a medium sized bird and the tail under part showed two distinctive broad black bands, which is easy to distinguish from the slightly whitish brown under. Big round yellowish eyes, and brownish upper wings and whitish under part of the belly covered with brown patches are also helpful in distinguishing this species from other owls. The beak is slightly smaller and black in color. Interestingly from my work, I noticed that Brown Boobooks responded most of the time to the playback calls and there were instances which were unique to this owl; Brown Boobooks arrive to inspect the broadcasting source most of the time. Why Brown Boobook responded to other species calls? Or it's just its nature? A real study is needed.

Acknowledgment

I hereby thank my friends - Sujnan, Ahirbudhanyan and Ashiya Salim who helped me during my survey. I also thank the DFO of Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary, range forest officers and staff of Kurichiyathu range.

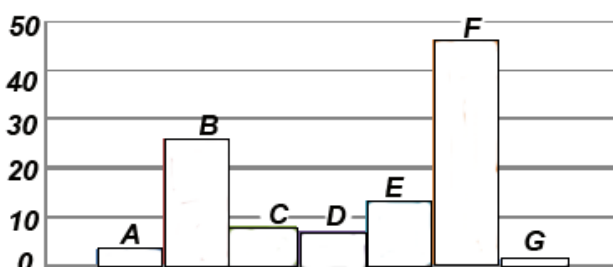
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About the Play-back method adopted

Mostly, I listed the call play-back method from smaller size species to larger ones. I started with ascending order from smaller to larger: - Jungle Owlet > Indian Scops Owl > Oriental Scops Owl > Brown Boobook > Brown Wood-Owl > Mottled Wood-Owl > Spot Bellied Eagle Owl > Brown Fish-Owl. From the chart it can be noticed that, when I played-back Brown Boobook's call, the Oriental Scops Owl responded most of the times, followed by the Brown Boobook. Response in a descending order was noticed as follows:- Oriental Scops Owl > Brown Boobook > no response at all > Indian Scops Owl > Jungle Owlet > Brown Fish-Owl and at least and last Spot-bellied Eagle Owl. It was noticed that whenever a Brown Boobook's call is played back, Oriental Scops Owl almost always responded to its call. In all, out of the 42 times I played back Brown Boobook call, 91 individual owl responses were recorded. From the 42 times of call play-backs, there were no responses at all during 13 times, and also species like Oriental Scops Owl and Brown Boobook readily responded to the calls most of the times. But the responses from the large species like Brown Fish-Owl and Spot Bellied Eagle Owl were rather infrequent.

Analysis of response to recorded calls of Brown Boobook Owl



Total number of response recorded (including no response data)=104

Total number of response recorded (without no response data)=91



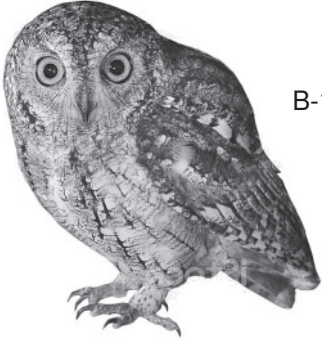
First photographic and recording of voice, of Oriental Scops Owl (*Otus sunia*) from Chhattisgarh. India

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The Oriental Scops Owl (Hence forth OSO) (*Otus sunia*) is distributed mainly from Himalayas and from western Himachal Pradesh east to Arunachal Pradesh, western and south India and sparingly in Central India (Grimmett *et al.* 1998, 2014). It has been enlisted from Bastar by Chandra *et al.* (2015) and Bharos *et al.* (2019).

Bharos *et al.* (2019) have recorded OSO from Kanger Valley National Park (KVNP) and Machkote Forest Range (MFR) from Bastar (Jagdalpur district) of Chhattisgarh and identification was confirmed on the basis of the visual observations and calls.

According to Champion and Seth (1968) the forest type of Bastar plateau can broadly be divided into three classes, viz Moist Peninsular Sal forest (3C/C2e), Southern Moist Mixed Deciduous forest (3B/C2) and Slightly Moist Teak forest (3B/C1c). The area is rich and unique in its faunal composition as well. Fauna shares characteristics of both northern and southern elements of the country. In these habitats the OSO was found.

On 16th January 2020 at location Milkulwada (18.864012° N, 82.012622° E) within, the geographical area of, KVNP and MFR a bird was sighted. The bird was photographed, when perched on a tree and its call was recorded using provisions for video of camera, which was the firm base for

its identification apart from examination of physical features like body size, overall colouration etc, following the standard literature of Ali & Ripley (1987), Grimmett *et al.* (1998, 2014) and Rasmussen and Anderton (2012). The recorded calls were matched with recorded archived calls of the species in question in website www.xeno-canto.org and *ebook* Grimmett *et al.* (2014). Subsequently the identification of species was got confirmed by Dr. Asad Rahmani and Dr. Prachi Mehta PhD. Both confirmed the species as *Otus sunia*.

The OSO has invariably been found amongst the foliage of old Mahua trees. During our visit to Dholkal village, Dantewada district in December 2019, we heard several calls of this species in the locality, which suggested the presence of the healthy population.

The Calls of the juvenile bird were recorded using video facility of cameras (Video 1) were found of low pitch, whereas the adult birds calling away had higher pitched calls leading to clear distinction between the younger and elder birds. Interestingly, when the recorded calls were played by us, the call-response was mostly by younger birds, rather than by adult birds.

Subsequently during our visit to KVNP and MFR in December 2019, calls were heard regularly but they were possibly made to establish social contacts.

Please visit the following URLs containing the archives of Newsletter for Birdwatchers for issues published between 1960 and 2000 (some issues are missing)

<http://www.archive.org/search.php?query=subject%3A%22Newsletter%20for%20Birdwatchers%22>

and for all issues published between 2000 and 2011

<https://sites.google.com/site/nlbw2011/>

for all issues published between 2010 and 2020

<https://sites.google.com/view/nlbw>

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The OSO has been recorded not only in KVNP (MFR) by us, but in all the other districts viz. Bastar (Jagdalpur district, Sukma, Dantewada, Bijapur, Kondagaon, Narayanpur and Kanker of Bastar division and even in Jashpur district in Surguja Division, situated in northern parts of the state, in May 2020.

Despite several visual observations of the OSO, no photographs could be obtained, till we obtained them on 16th January 2020. These photographs are thus the first photographic and voice evidences, obtained from Chhattisgarh and establishes its occurrence.

Acknowledgement

Authors express their sincere thanks to Dr. Asad R. Rahmani, former Director Bombay Natural History Society and Dr. Prachi Mehta, for identification of the OSO. Thanks to Harpinder Singh Panesar for photographs, Yash Shukla, Softy Smith, and several other companions for field assistance.

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<http://www.xeno-canto.org>, last accessed on 30th May 2020

CORRESPONDENCE

NEWSLETTER FOR BIRDWATCHERS - A GREAT SERVICE TO ASIAN ORNITHOLOGIST COMMUNITY, by Dr. Asad R Rahmani, former Director, Bombay Natural History Society, Hornbill House, Opp. Lion Gate, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Road, Fort, Mumbai, Maharashtra. PIN - 400001. Email <rahmani1.asad@gmail.com>

Many Thanks for sending the links to download all the back issues of the *Newsletter*. I think it is a great service to Asian ornithologist community.

I keep on emphasizing to people to publish their findings as we need lot of documentation, even of natural history observations. These days journals have become so boring with all the statistics and intricate methodology that most of the amateur birdwatchers are put off and think that their data/information has no value. But I tell them, science is developed by sharing data/information in any form. *Newsletter* is one source where we can publish natural history observation on birds. Incidentally, I do not believe publishing only in so-called "high impact" journals (I believe in peer-review though). I believe that the paper should be of such high value that it increases the 'impact factor' of the journal.

I will certainly share the links to my large group. I will also send you some articles after some time as I am busy in finishing many articles and papers, and also checking thesis of my student. Keep me nodding from time to time.

Thanks again for the email and the links.

NEWSLETTER FOR BIRDWATCHERS HAS IMMENSELY HELPED THE CAUSE OF AVIAN RESEARCH, PUBLICATION & CONSERVATION IN INDIA, by Prof. H S A Yahya, Former Chairman, Dept. of Wildlife of Wildlife Sciences and Dean, Faculty of Life Sciences, AMU Aligarh. Email <hsa.yahya@gmail.com>

Very nice to read the updates of our beloved NLBW. Indeed the Magazine has immensely helped the cause of Avian research, publication and conservation in India. Celebrating its Diamond Jubilee is quite fitting. I wish long life (ever lasting) to the NLBW even after we are off the scene!

I am so glad that I have had acquaintance with its founding fathers such as Mr. Zafar Fatuhally, Dr. Salim Ali and Mr. Humayun Abul Ali during my early birding days; and great fortune to have Dr. Salim Ali as my Ph.D. Supervisor.

As you know there is acute lacking of coordination among different departments in our country, the luke warm response of Locust Monitoring Department to share data of locust movement for the conservation of Amur Falcon is not a surprise. I wish the concerned authorities and the departments more cooperative and do the needful for conserving the avian and other biodiversity.

I expect more voices from budding ornithologists and biodiversity conservationists for the same.

ETERNALLY GRATEFUL TO THE NEWSLETTER FOR BIRDWATCHERS, by Dr. Taej Mundkur, Ph.D. International Waterbird Census Coordinator and Senior Technical Officer, Wetlands International, Horapark 9, 6717 LZ Ede, The Netherlands, Email: <Taej.Mundkur@wetlands.org>

Warm greetings from the Netherlands, where we have also been in near lock-down for the last month or so. Trust you and your family are keeping safe and healthy through this madness!

Very good to receive this email from NLBW. The Newsletter for Birdwatchers, under late Zafarbhay fostered my early birding days and encouraged first contributions of observations; eternally grateful to the Newsletter for Birdwatchers.

Having moved to the Netherlands in 2009, I thought I had written a couple times to request that the printed copy not be sent to my home in Pune. But my mother informed me that this was still coming into last year. I am happy to access it online as and when needed.

IN THE NEWS

UN REPORT CALLS FOR “RADICAL TRANSFORMATIONS” TO AVERT GLOBAL CLIMATE CATASTROPHE, as reported in Climate Change by Bryan Dyne on November 27, 2019, (Originally published by WWS.org)

The United Nations Environment Programme issued its tenth Emissions Gap Report yesterday, which highlighted the stark failure of the 2015 Paris Agreement to curb global greenhouse gas emissions and halt global warming. Even if countries hold themselves to their emissions pledges from four years ago, the report warns that global average temperatures will still increase to 3.2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and Earth will be increasingly hostile to human life.

This is well past the two degree limit set by the Paris Agreement, and more than twice the 1.5 degree limit that has been adopted since then. As the report notes, governments and corporations have not curbed their carbon emissions, but largely done the opposite. Greenhouse gas emissions have risen at an average rate of 1.5 percent over the past decade, resulting in the release of the equivalent of 55.3 gigatons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere in 2018, 37.5 gigatons of which were emitted from burning fossil fuels.

Global warming has already caused catastrophic injury to large sections of the world's population. More powerful hurricanes such as Sandy, Maria and Dorian cause billions of dollars in destruction and cost thousands of lives. Wildfires in Australia have made koalas “functionally extinct.” Nearly 900 million human beings are at risk of starvation as previously fertile lands turn into desert, while 3.2 billion men, women and children live in areas that will not support human life likely by the end of the next decade.

There are already at least 210 million so-called “climate refugees”—those forced to permanently flee their homes as a result of climate change-related disasters, and not from war or other forms of violence. The United Nations estimates that up to one billion will be displaced by 2050. To have any chance of abating the unfolding crisis, the document echoes reports going

back more than four decades calling for reduced carbon dioxide, methane & nitrous oxide emissions.

The report places special emphasis on the fact that the twenty richest countries in the world (the G20) account for 78 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, noting that it is the European Union and countries such as the United States, China, India and Russia that will have to make the most drastic cuts. It calls for “radical transformations” in energy production and the industrial sector, transferring power generation from coal and oil to solar, wind, tidal, geothermal and other renewable energy sources.

Another way of putting this, however, is that 70 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions come from 100 major companies, a fact that United Nations reports gloss over. It is not the world's population that is responsible for climate change, but rather its transnational corporations, which operate only to enrich their executives and major shareholders. To quote British Petroleum (BP), they are more concerned with the “potential financial impact” of limiting carbon emissions than the health of the planet and those that live on it.

Moreover, Earth's temperature would no longer be directly related to the burning of fossil fuels, making it exponentially more difficult for modern scientific techniques to contain or reverse.

The only way to avert such a scenario would be to implement a scientifically planned global restructuring of the world's energy industry to transition from a reliance on fossil fuels to renewable energy. This in turn would involve a transformation on the same scale of transportation, logistics, agriculture and ultimately society as a whole.

The only way to place the world's productive forces on such an internationally coordinated basis is to overthrow the profit system, nation-states and capitalism. Its opposite must be established—socialism, the democratic control of the world's productive forces by the international working class.

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11	Purple Sunbird (<i>Nectarinia asiatica</i>) ♀ in its nest built on a rope used for drying clothes	6

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